

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Springdale  
other names/site number Half Moon; The Alexander Trimble House; Holly Hill; The Dixon House/Farm  
DHR File 081-0180

**2. Location**

street & number 70 Gilmore Lane not for publication N/A  
city or town Lexington vicinity N/A  
state Virginia code VA county Rockbridge code 163 Zip 24450

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination        request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets        does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant        nationally        statewide X locally. (        See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property        meets        does not meet the National Register criteria. (        See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby certify that this property is:  
       entered in the National Register  
       See continuation sheet.  
       determined eligible for the National Register Signature of Keeper \_\_\_\_\_  
       See continuation sheet.  
       determined not eligible for the National Register  
       removed from the National Register Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_  
       other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. Classification**

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**Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property** (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

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**6. Function or Use**

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**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)Cat: domestic Sub: single dwelling**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)Cat: domestic Sub: single dwelling

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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)Federal Style**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick  
roof metal  
walls brick  
other wood

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**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance** ca. 1812-1955

**Significant Dates** N/A

**Significant Person** (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** N/A

**Architect/Builder** Jordan, John

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

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- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property approximately one acre**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

1 17 639234 4178141 2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Michael J. Pulice, Architectural Historian  
Organization: Virginia Department of Historic Resources date May 2005  
street & number: 1030 Penmar Ave SE telephone 540-857-7586  
city or town Roanoke state VA zip code 24013

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name James C. & Mary Kidd  
street & number 70 Gilmore Lane telephone 540-463-7537  
city or town Lexington state VA zip code 24450

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**7. Summary Description:**

Springdale is located in the heart of the Great Valley of Virginia, about four miles southeast of Lexington, just off of Wesley Chapel Road and just east of Interstate 81. The sole historic building remaining on the property is a two-story, brick temple-wing-plan house. Its gable roof is covered with standing-seam tin. The two-feet-thick foundation walls are constructed of roughly-dressed, uncoursed limestone. The structure began c. 1812 as a Palladian three-part form with a two-story, three bay, front gabled, Greek-temple-form central mass and one-and-a-half-story flanking wings, all of Flemish bond brick, with integral end chimneys. The wings were raised to two stories in 1914 using bricks from an old law office on the premises. The full-length front porch with a pediment above the front entrance replaced the original, smaller porch in 1914. Among the notable exterior features of the house are its large, distinctive, stuccoed half-moon, or *lunette* motif in the front gable, and stuccoed jack arches over the windows. The interior of the house features elegant, Federal style carved mantels, paneled wainscoting, wooden cornices and random-width pine flooring.

**Narrative Description:**

The outline of the original, smaller versions of the flanking wings can be clearly seen in the brickwork at each end of the house. The tops of the original rear walls of the wings are also clearly delineated where the Flemish bond terminates at the one-and-a-half -story level, continuing to the two-story level with common bond. The 1914 front porch is supported by attractive, slender Doric columns, but the porch roof obscures the window arches across all seven original bays at the first floor level. The two-over-two windows are modern replacements of the 1914 windows. Early, louvered, wood shutters, painted black, and original iron shutter hardware remain intact. Over the front entrance is a decorative transom light with tracery muntins. Stone pillars beneath the present large porch indicate the size of the original much smaller porch. Also original to Springdale is the small, thirteen-pane window above the front door, said to represent the first thirteen states.

The bricks are well made and uniform, average sized (approximately 8"x 2.5"x 4"), with smooth faces and dark red color. A small percentage are glazed or fire-darkened. They are said to have been made "just south of the old vegetable garden." Remains of the old kiln where bricks were made for the house were uncovered on the north side of the yard when a new septic system was installed. The overhand-struck brick joints are fine, with vertical joints measuring about 3/8" on average, and bed joints measuring 1/4" on average.

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Originally the house plan consisted of a front foyer, a large hall and one large room in the center section downstairs, with one-room single story wings on either side. The second floor of the center section contained one large room, a small room and a stair hall. On the first floor are three fine Federal style mantels each with fluted pilasters flanking the firebox opening and variations of a punctate pattern below the mantelshelf. The finest mantel, in the parlor, features a fluted center tablet and a floral punctate motif. The formal rooms and staircase walls are treated with painted recessed-paneled wainscoting. Massive, hewn floor joists can be seen in the basement. In one of two basement rooms is a large stone fireplace with a brick segmental arched opening, once used for cooking. In the attic are Roman-numeraled, hand-hewn rafters, with each pair lapped and pegged together.

Early dependencies, no longer extant, included log barns and stables, a stone springhouse situated beside a “never failing” spring at the foot of the hill, slave quarters, Joseph Steele’s law office, and a detached brick kitchen with brick floor on the south side of the house.

Early 20<sup>th</sup>-century-alterations, made circa 1908-1914, included construction of the two-story back porches, enlargement of the front porch, addition of two second-floor bedrooms over the one-story wings and addition of a frame kitchen. The old brick kitchen and law office were torn down and the brick used for raising the wings one-half story, and construction of the springhouse.

## **8. Statement of Significance**

### **Summary**

Springfield, a fine brick manor house near Lexington, was built c. 1812 by Colonel John Jordan, for Alexander Trimble, a farmer and businessman. Jordan was a well-known entrepreneur and builder during the period in the Lexington area, responsible for the construction of other notable domiciles, including his own mansion called “Stono” in 1818, and also “Little Stono, in 1816,” both of which still stand as landmarks. Like the others, Springdale is noteworthy for its three-part Palladian massing and three-bay, front gabled, central section with lunette. Jordan’s work was heavily influenced by the designs of Thomas Jefferson, for whom he manufactured bricks for use at Monticello in 1805-6. Jordan and business partner Samuel Darst are credited with introducing classical-inspired architecture to the Lexington area. They designed and built the Roman Revival-styled, temple-form, Washington Hall at Washington and Lee University (also in Lexington) in 1824, and a number of other buildings in and around Lexington. Washington Hall is the oldest and most prominent building on the campus. Springdale stands as a significant example of Jordan’s work and the domestic architecture of the period in western Virginia.

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**Justification of Criteria**

Springfield is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the regional level, under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, because of its association with John Jordan, a very noteworthy builder of the period and region; and because of its rare architectural form, quality of detail, and high degree of historic integrity. Its period of significance begins with construction, c. 1812, and ends in 1955 with the 50-year mandatory cut-off.

**Narrative History**

Alexander Trimble (1762-1816), who purchased 600 acres of the Borden grant in 1790, appears to have been the first owner of the Springdale property. He and his second wife, Martha Grigsby Trimble (1770-1868) were married December 12, 1793. The Trimble family may have resided in the log cabin known to have been on the land before the brick house was built, c.1812. A Mutual Insurance Society document, dated December 3, 1812, includes a sketch with a likeness of the house, showing its three-part form, and a description: "two-story Brick dwelling house covered with wood [wood shingles] 92 x 22'. Two wings, one-story brick, covered with wood, 16' x 16'. Brick kitchen covered with wood." The house and kitchen were valued at \$1800 and \$100, respectively.<sup>1</sup> Trimble's farm eventually became known as "Trimble Hills," but was referred to on the assurance form as "Holly Hill." In his last will and testament, dated November 12, 1813, Trimble bequeathed the house and a large part of his estate to his nephew Joseph Steele and wife Martha Paxton Steele, although Trimble did not die until November 22, 1816. Joseph Steele (1795-1872) was a prominent lawyer in Lexington and a trustee of Washington College, now Washington & Lee University.<sup>2</sup>

Based a persistent oral and written tradition attributing Springdale to Jordan, the house's unusual plan, its methods and materials of construction, as well as its location and date of construction, the architect-builder of Springdale appears to have been none other than Colonel John Jordan (1777-1854). Jordan is a well-known historical figure in the region, and the subject of numerous poorly substantiated and often conflicting legends. He was born in Goochland County, Virginia, and lived in Halifax County before establishing himself in the town of Lexington in 1796 (some sources say 1802 or 1803). A vastly resourceful man, he excelled in the businesses and industries of architecture and building construction, iron smelting, gristmills, blacksmithing, and cotton and woolen textile manufacturing. Some written histories credit him with involvement in the construction of nearly every important building built in or around Lexington during his long, successful career.<sup>3</sup> Present-day historians credit Jordan for introducing classical refinement to the early architecture of the Lexington-Rockbridge County area. Although not verified, the earliest house (perhaps erroneously) attributed to him in Lexington is Mulberry Hill (117-0010, NRHP 9/9/82), begun in 1797.

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It is well documented that Jordan worked as a brickmason at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello around 1805-6 and owned a slave woman married to Jefferson's brickmason slave "Brown," whom Jefferson ultimately sold to Jordan-- as evidenced by a letter from Jefferson to Jordan dated December 21, 1805.<sup>4</sup> Jordan has been credited with designing and building the splendid Ann Smith Academy in 1808, "a brick structure of rather pretentious proportions", once considered the handsomest building in town; and a house called Little Stono (DHR #081-0079), outside of Lexington, around 1816.<sup>5</sup> Jordan and Samuel Darst (1788-1864), the son of prominent Lexington potter, brickmaker and contractor Benjamin Darst, operated the firm of Jordan and Darst from 1815 to 1824, with Jordan negotiating the contracts and Darst managing its operations. The firm was involved in the construction of some of Lexington's most impressive buildings, including Washington Hall at Washington and Lee University (DHR #117-0022, NHL 11/11/71); Stono, Jordan's home near VMI at Jordan's Point (DHR #117-0016, NRHP 4/1/75); Darst's own mansion, Barclay House (now called Beaumont) on Lee Avenue; the Pines, the residence of the elder Darst; and the Ruffner House on Lexington's Preston St., completed in 1824. Around 1820 Jordan and Darst are said to have done some additional work for Jefferson at the University of Virginia. Although their involvement in building UVA has not been documented, their names appear in a March 9, 1819 letter from Archibald Stuart to Thomas Jefferson in which proposals from a number brickwork contractors were mentioned. Jordan also improved Lexington's transportation system by building roads connecting the town with the more established routes across the Blue Ridge and Allegheny mountains; an important covered bridge burned by Confederate forces in 1864; the bateau canal on the James River at Balcony Falls beginning in 1824; and the North River Canal System in the 1830s.<sup>6</sup> Jordan and his wife were founding members of the Lexington Baptist Church, constituted May 9, 1841.<sup>7</sup>

### Springdale after 1889

In 1889, most of the property was purchased by John W. Barclay of Lexington. In 1902, Edgar McClung Dixon and wife Mary McCormick Dixon bought part of the farm from Barclay, and the remaining portion in 1904. After Dixon's death in the 1950s, the farm and house passed to daughter Odessa Dixon Holman and husband Samuel R. Holman.<sup>8</sup>

Some window frames and sashes were replaced in 1914 when Edgar Dixon renovated the house. The renovation included construction of the present full-length porch to replace a "much smaller porch." The original stone piers supporting the porch were re-used. There was a brick office building in the yard, on the north side of the main house, and which is said to have been used by a lawyer. Tradition also holds that magistrate court was held there before the Rockbridge Courthouse was built. This building was torn down in 1914 by Dixon, and the brick was used to raise the two original one-story wings of the house to create second story bedrooms. The old office building had become dangerous, and was held together with very long iron rods. The farm received electricity in 1940, and the first



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bathroom plumbing was installed in the house in 1949. An old detached kitchen on the south side of the house was torn down about 1908 and the brick used for a springhouse, to which the water was piped from the foot of the hill by means of a ram. The kitchen originally had a brick floor, and stood just below the springhouse, which is now gone too.<sup>9</sup>

In the late 1900s the house was used for student housing for a time and later stood empty, or was used for farm storage. When Mr. and Mrs. James C. Kidd bought the property in 1997, the house was in need of rehabilitation, but was still structurally sound.<sup>10</sup>

**Architectural Context**

Over the years, Springdale has been referred by a variety of other names, such as Holly Hill. By no coincidence, it is closely related temporally and architecturally to a number of other houses in Rockbridge County with the word "hill" in their name. These include Fancy Hill, Hickory Hill, Cherry Hill, Fruit Hill, Liberty Hill, Clover Hill, Cress Hill and Rose Hill. All of these residences are commodious brick homes with a high level of architectural refinement. Furthermore, all of the patrons for whom the houses were built were members of the Grigsby family or its many branches. (Springdale was built for Martha Grigsby and her husband Alexander Trimble). Although the Grigsbys and others related by marriage built many more fine dwellings in the area than are listed above, a group of them have come to be known as "the Seven Hills," and have been discussed at length in written histories and genealogical literature. All of the notable Grigsby houses were erected during the early National period, are designed in the Federal or Neo-classical styles, and are of Flemish bond brick construction.<sup>11</sup> The houses are typically center passage plans rather than the temple-wing form, which remained rare in the area. With the exception of Springdale, neither Colonel Jordan nor the Darsts have been demonstrably connected with the Grigsby family residences.

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Endnotes

1. Mutual Assurance Society record # 1310.
2. Odessa Dixon Holman, 2.
3. Boley, 185.
4. "Stono" National Register nomination, 1974. Virginia Department of Historic Resources archives, Richmond, Virginia.
5. Boley: 77.
6. Lyle and Simpson, *The Architecture of Historic Lexington*, 18-20, 23-24, 81.
7. Boley, 30.
8. "Washington and Lee University Historic District" National Register nomination, 1970. Virginia Department of Historic Resources archives, Richmond, Virginia.
9. Holman, 3.
10. Mr. And Mrs. James Kidd, personal communication, March 2005 .
11. Grigsby Gazette, 4-13; Dudka, "The Seven Hills."
12. Mr. and Mrs. James C. Kidd, personal communication, March 2005.

9. Bibliography

Boley, Henry. *Lexington in Old Virginia*. Richmond: Garret and Massie, 1936.

Donovan, Jerry J. "John Jordan, Virginia Builder." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. IV, No. 3, 1950.

Dudka, David, M. "The Seven Hills: The Mansions of Rockbridge County." Senior thesis, Washington & Lee University, 1981.

Grigsby Gazette. National Grigsby Family Society. Vol. 23, No. 2, June 2005.

Grizzard, Frank Edgar, Jr. *A Documentary History of the Construction of the Buildings at the University of Virginia, 1817-1828*. Doctoral dissertation, Corcoran Department of History, University of Virginia, August 1996.

Holman, Odessa Dixon. "A History of Edgar M. and Mary M. Dixon Farms." Unpublished document, 1966.

Isley, Willard. "John Jordan, Builder." *The Proceedings*, Vol. 7, 1966-69. Rockbridge Historical Society.

Kidd, Mr. and Mrs. James C., personal communication, March 2005.

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Mutual Assurance Society record # 1310. December 3, 1812, Washington & Lee University Special Collections.

Royster, Lyle, Jr. and Pamela H. Simpson. *The Architecture of Historic Lexington*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1977.

Simpson, Pamela H. Personal communication. August 2005.

“Stono” National Register nomination, 1974. Virginia Department of Historic Resources archives, Richmond, Virginia.

“Washington and Lee University Historic District” National Register nomination, 1970. Virginia Department of Historic Resources archives, Richmond, Virginia.

## **10. Geographic Data**

### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated parcel is identified as parcel 98 –A– 2D2 on Rockbridge County tax maps.

### **Boundary Justification**

The property nominated for listing includes the entire currently owned tax parcel known as Springdale.

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All photographs are of: **Springdale**, Rockbridge County, Virginia

Date: March 2005

Photographer: Michael J. Pulice

Negative No. 22043, 22105

Location of negatives: VDHR, Richmond

1. VIEW OF: South (front) elevation. Neg. No. 22043
2. VIEW OF: South (front) elevation (alternate angle). Neg. No. 22043
3. VIEW OF: South (front) elevation (alternate angle). Neg. No. 22043
4. VIEW OF: West elevation. Neg. No. 22043
5. VIEW OF: East elevation. Neg. No. 22043
6. VIEW OF: North(rear) elevation. Neg. No. 22043
7. VIEW OF: First floor, interior, parlor mantel. Neg. No. 22043
8. VIEW OF: First floor, interior, dining room mantel. Neg. No. 22043
9. VIEW OF: First floor, interior, library mantel. Neg. No. 22043
10. VIEW OF: First floor, interior, bedroom mantel. Neg. No. 22043
11. VIEW OF: First floor, interior, front door. Neg. No. 22043
12. VIEW OF: First floor, interior door. Neg. No. 22043
13. VIEW OF: First floor, interior, stairway landing. Neg. No. 22043
14. VIEW OF: Attic, interior, rafter pair. Neg. No. 22043
15. VIEW OF: Attic, interior, rafter w/ Roman numeral. Neg. No. 22043
16. VIEW OF: Exterior, west elevation (alternate view). Neg. No. 22105
17. VIEW OF: View from front yard facing west (neighboring property). Neg. No. 22105